

1609/4694.
A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the Right Honourable the

L O R D - M A Y O R,

T H E

A L D E R M E N *and* L I V E R I E S

Of the several Companies of the City of L O N D O N,

In the C A T H E D R A L C H U R C H of *St. Paul,*

On *Thursday, January* 30, 1745.

Being the Day appointed to be observed as the Day of the
Martyrdom of King C H A R L E S I.

By *THOMAS PERSEHOWSE*, M. A.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. ROBERTS in *Warwick-Lane*, 1745.

[Price Six-pence.]

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1609/4694.

H O A R E, Mayor.

Tuesday, *the 18th Day of February 1745,*
and in the Nineteenth Year of the Reign of
King GEORGE the Second, of Great
Britain, &c.

IT is Order'd, That the Thanks of this Court
be given to the Reverend Mr. *Persehowse*, for
his Sermon preached before this Court, and the
Liveries of the several Companies of this City,
at the Cathedral-Church of *St. Paul* on *Thursday*
the Thirtieth of *January* last, being the Anniver-
sary Fast for the Martyrdom of King *Charles* the
First, and that he be desired to print the same.

M A N.



T O
The Right Honourable
Sir RICHARD HOARE, Knt.
LORD-MAYOR,
And the Worshipful the Court of Aldermen,
THIS
DISCOURSE,

Published at their Request,
Is, with all due Deference, inscrib'd

By their most Obedient Humble Servant,

THOMAS PERSEHOWSE.

Barnes, March 1, 1745.

The Gift of the Rev^d Mr. *Warner* of *Cherinton*.
May 2. 1748.



ROMANS iii. 16, 17, 18.

Destruction and Misery, are in their Ways: And the Way of Peace have they not known. There is no Fear of God before their Eyes.

WE are solemnly met here this Day to commemorate the undeserved, unhappy Fate of an excellent Prince; and deprecate the Vengeance of that Guilt, by which he fell a Sacrifice to the more than civil Rage of his own perfidious Subjects: Met by the highest Authority of this Realm, an Act of the Legislature, which enjoins, that the Anniversary of that dark Day shall for ever hereafter be set apart, to be kept and observ'd as an Anniversary of Fasting and Humiliation, to implore the Mercy of God, that neither the Guilt of that sacred and innocent Blood, nor those other Sins, by which God was provok'd to deliver up both us and our King into the Hands of unreasonable Men, may at any time hereafter be visited on us or our Posterity. This is the Business of the Day, and I hope every body has been sincere in the Prayers that have been

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offered up, and that the Lord will hear us in this Time of Trouble.

I believe I may venture to assert of the Rebels in the last Age, as indeed of all others, that they will prove the Words of my Text to be strictly true, that *Destruction and Misery are in their Ways: And the Way of Peace have they not known. There is no Fear of God before their Eyes.*

The Words are part of that Description which the Apostle gives of the State of universal Degeneracy and Corruption, under which the whole World, Jews and Gentiles, lay at the Time of the Appearance of the promis'd appointed Atonement for the Sins of the whole human Race.

The Design of it is to shew, that there is no Merit or Righteousness in Man, that could entitle him to *be*, or *make* an Atonement for himself; and the Description itself is drawn in the Colours with which the various Characters of Wickedness are painted in the Prophets of the Old Testament: And of all those various Characters which disgrace human Nature and disturb Society, there is none to which the Words of the Text do more justly appertain, than that of the present Day and the present Times.

They were the same Designs of wicked Men, whose Feet were swift to shed Blood, which *then* lurking under the fair Appearance of the Defence
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of Liberty, and the Glory of God, sacrificed both to their own private Views ; and the same would *now* grace the Name of a wicked Rebellion, calculated only for their own Ends, with the specious Name of a Restoration and national Interest.

What Destruction and Misery, the inseparable Attendants of Rebellion, were in *their* Way our Forefathers sensibly felt ; and what there has been in that of the *present* Disturbers of our Peace, too many already have, and all of us would much more grievously feel, should God have thought fit, or should he still, for the Punishment of our Sins, to deliver us over as a Prey into the Hands of those blood-thirsty and cruel Men, who, as well as their Predecessors of the last Age, have not known the Way of Peace ; and before whose Eyes, how much soever they may use the *Name*, there is no *fear* of God. But the present Occasion directs me more particularly to the former, though the latter I shall not forget.

The Calamities (as I said) of Civil War are terrible ; nothing but Destruction and Misery. What Devastations were caus'd by those pious Saints of the Times I am mentioning, who under the Pretence of subjecting all the Scepters of the Earth to the Scepter of Christ, subjected their lawful Sovereign to their lawless Will, and thereby shew'd their Hypocrisy, by being willing to kill, only that they might reign themselves ?

The Way of Peace they did not know, for when he spake to them thereof, they made themselves ready for Battle. Far be it from me to say, that King *Charles* had no Faults; he was a Man and subject to like Infirmities with human Nature: But I may venture to say with all his Faults, great even as his Enemies would have them, yet his Virtues would turn the Scale; if Piety, Chastity and Temperance are of any Price in the Sight of God. On the other hand, I do not suppose the first Disturbers of Peace design'd to proceed so far as to the Blood of their Sovereign; but it would have been more for the Honour of this Nation if they had proceeded by gentle Degrees, and remembered the wise Man's Advice; *The Beginning of Strife is as when one letteth out Water; therefore leave off Contention before it be meddled with,* Prov. xvii. 14.

Who could make more Condescensions than he did? He in reality unking'd himself before he dy'd. It is a Maxim in the Law, that the King can do no wrong, and a very just one; for he that is oblig'd to see with other Mens Eyes, and hear with others Ears, how is it possible but he may be impos'd upon, and happy is that King that is not.

The Royal Martyr on the Scaffold took notice of one Circumstance peculiarly remarkable, and that is, *how God had punish'd that unjust Sentence, which he had suffered to take effect on another, by*
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the same on himself. If we go through the whole Distractions of those Times, we shall find it very observable how just the Almighty is in all his Ways, and holy in all his Works. I do not, nor will pretend to go through all, that is more than your Patience will probably allow me; but it may not be amiss to mention a few things, just to shew how dangerous it is to break through a Constitution, as ours is, so happily established both in Church and State.

The Lords consented (at the Desire of the Commons) that the Bishops should not sit in Parliament; the House of Commons, in return because the Lords would not go all their Lengths, voted the House of Lords useless and dangerous. The King went into the House of Commons (perhaps too rashly) and demanded the Six Members to be deliver'd to him, which was reckon'd a great Breach of Privilege; the Usurper comes, and with an armed Force turns the whole Body out: 'Twas for himself he intended the King should die, not for them.

I must beg leave to mention one thing more, that these People had no more the Fear of God before their Eyes, than they had regard to an injur'd Sovereign. One Part of the Nation voted the King's Condescensions sufficient, but they could only vote, the Army had the Power; that very Army which
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they had raised to support them against the King, was become their Masters as well as the King's; there was nothing left to be disputed about but the Church-Lands. The Sectaries of all Denominations imagin'd them to be a fruitful Soil, they desired there to rest for ever, for they cou'd have a Delight to dwell therein. Episcopacy must be abolish'd; no other Terms can be allowed, if that is not granted. But here the royal Martyr's Conscience interven'd, and tho' at the lowest Ebb of his Affairs, from one of his last Prisons, he sends a Message becoming himself.

As a Christian he avow'd*, that he was satisfied in his Judgment, that this Order was plac'd in the Church by the Apostles themselves, and that ever since that time it had continued in all christian Churches throughout the World until the last Century of Years: And in this Church and Nation, in all Times of Change and Reformation, it had been upheld by the Wisdom of his Ancestors, as the great Preserver of Doctrine, Discipline and Order in the Service of God. As a King, at his Coronation, he had not only taken a solemn Oath to maintain this Order, but that he himself, and his Predecessors in Confirmation of the great Charter, had in-
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* His Majesty's Message for Peace from the Isle of *Wight*, Numb. 17. *Reliquiæ sacræ Carolinæ*, 8vo. p. 126. or *Dugdale's* short View of the Troubles, &c. p. 268.

separably woven the Rights of the Churches into the Liberties of the Subject.

In another Message* from the same Place, he First takes notice how unreasonable it is, for the two Houses to offer Violence to the Conscience of their Sovereign; and then says, if they will not think fit to recede from the Strictness of their Demands in these Particulars, he could with more Comfort cast himself upon his Saviour's Goodness to support him under all Afflictions, how great so ever, that may befall him, rather than for any politick Consideration, which may seem to be a Means to restore him, deprive himself of the inward Tranquillity of his Mind.

This heroick Resolution he held, we see, to the last, and his Memory would have been celebrated with the Praises due to a Martyr, if he had dy'd in any of the primitive Churches Time, as it is now justly celebrated by our own.

The Days of the Martyrdom of the primitive Christians are generally stil'd their Birth-days, in Memory of the *Tribulations thro' which they entred into the Kingdom of Heaven*; and so great were the Triumphs of God's Grace in the Sufferings of this pious Prince; so much for the Honour of the Faith of which he was a religious Defender, and of that Church for which he fell a Sacrifice; that
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* His Majesty's further Declaration concerning Episcopacy. *Bibliotheca regia*, Numb. 30, 319. p. 149.

this Anniversary of his Martyrdom might have been celebrated in the same Manner had he fallen by the Hands of Foreigners or profest Infidels. But when it is considered how deep this Nation was concerned in the Guilt of his Sufferings, so deep that nothing but the Blood of the Son of God can expiate, and that God has declared, he will visit the Sins of the Fathers upon the Children unto the third and fourth Generation of them that hate him, the Legislature has justly appointed it a Day of Humiliation and Fasting. Thus was the Anointed of the Lord, the Breath of our Nostrils taken from us, and his Hope was full of Immortality---but he is at Peace*.

I have now finish'd the First Part of what I design'd to speak to, and in the rest of this Discourse beg leave to exhort you to a serious Consideration of what has been said, that 'twas the Sins of the Nation occasioned that Rebellion, so likewise we should leave off sinning now as the only certain Means of suppressing that unnatural Rebellion

* The noble Historian's Character of him is in few Words, that he was the worthiest Gentleman, the best Master, the best Friend, the best Husband, the best Father, and the best Christian that the Age in which he lived produced. And thus ended a Year of the highest Dissimulation and Hypocrisy, a Year of the deepest Villany, and most bloody Treason, that ever any Nation was ever curs'd with or under; a Year in which the Memory of all Transactions ought to be ras'd out of all Records, lest by the Success of it, Atheism, Infidelity and Rebellion should be propagated. *Is habitus Animorum fuit, ut pessimum facinus auderent pauci, plures vellent, omnes paterentur.*

bellion which is now rais'd against his present most sacred Majesty.

The Terrors of the Lord seem to be gone abroad in the World. Almost all *Europe* is in a Flame, and it has spread to our own Country too. Tho' happily for us it seems at present to be mov'd farther off; yet nothing can *extinguish* that Flame which God's Judgments kindle, but the leaving off those crying Sins which the Land ought to mourn as the Cause of them.

We have the Happiness of having a King now placed over us, called by the Voice of the People to protect us; and can any one, will any one say he has not protected us in our Religion and civil Rights from that Popish Superstition and arbitrary Power which had well nigh overturn'd both? Can any one say he has in the least swerved from his Coronation Oath? has he not made the Laws of the Land the Rule of his Government? did he not come to reign over a willing and free People at their own Request? was not the Succession settled in the Illustrious House of *Hanover*, in the stated Form of national Consent, by an Act of the whole Legislature? has he abridg'd us of any of our Liberties? Does not the meanest of his Subjects fully enjoy his Property and Liberty, Words always pleasing to *British* Ears?

What could possibly be the Case of a Change of Government, but to have a Popish Defender of the Protestant Faith; a Person bred up in the Bigotry of the Church of *Rome*; who could not but destroy our Liberties, with our Religion, as soon as ever it was in his Power? nay, though any could be so cowardly as to be a Convert to Popery, it would, such is its Catholick Charity, burn their Bodies for the Salvation of their Souls.

As to Promises, I mean Popish ones, every one in his Senses certainly will not regard them; their constant Maxim, back'd by no less Authority than one of their general Councils, is that no Faith is to be kept with Hereticks upon pain of Damnation: And the *moderate Pope*, as he was called, has in this Century declar'd Stipulations in Favour of Protestants to be null and void, whenever they are prejudicial to the Catholick Faith, the Salvation of Souls, or any Rights of the Church whatsoever, even though such Engagements have been often ratified and confirm'd on Oath.

The Promises of the bloody Queen *Mary* are well known by History; how were they kept? the Declaration of King *James* the II^d. at the Council-table, his Speech in Parliament, and his Conduct during the Time he *chose* to reign over us, are too well known by many now alive: I say *chose*, for as a learned Prelate * observes, King *James*

* Bishop of Oxford.

set himself aside, he abandoned the Government rather than administer it according to Law, and by so doing left the Nation under a Necessity of providing for itself in the Manner they did; the three Estates of the Kingdom were the only fit Judges of a doubtful Succession, and fixed it where they did, passing by the abdicating Father and his pretended Son.

As it has pleas'd God to open the Eyes of the Rulers of this Nation, that we are brought out of the *Darkness* into the marvellous *Light* of the Gospel, surely we should take care not to be covered therewith any more; which must be the Case if a Popish Pretender (which God forbid) should ever prevail here; and it is pretty certain it would be a Darkness that might be felt. Let us beseech God Almighty that he would not remove his Candlestick from us, ever remembering the Words of Queen *Anne*, of ever blessed Memory, to her Parliament †: *All that is dear to you must be irrecoverably lost, if ever the Design of a Popish Pretender, bred up in the Principles of the most Arbitrary Government, should take place.*

Let us then all unite with one Heart and one Voice, for this is no Party, but a common Cause. The Option is either a Protestant, which God continue to latest Generations, or a Popish Power, which

which Heaven avert. *Britons* united may, under God, defy the World. Let us, I say, solemnly beg of God to go forth with our Fleets and Armies against this bold Invader, this Disturber of our Peace; let us principally rely (though human Means are, and must be used) upon the Lord of Hosts, the God of Battle; for it is not by Might nor by Power that the Victory is gained, but by the Favour of Almighty God, who, we trust, if we truly repent of our Sins, will be our Defence in this great Danger and Time of greatest Trouble: His Favour is our best Security.

Instances I have not time to mention now; only reflect in general how God dealt with his People *Israel*. When they neglected his Worship and bow'd to Idols, then he gave them up into the Enemies Hands, and let them be led away Captive; but when they cried unto the Lord in their Distress, and turned from the Evil of their Ways, he repented of the Evil and had Mercy on them.

May God not deal with us after our Sins nor reward us after our Iniquities. Is not the Iniquity of this Land exceeding great? what Deluges of Profaneness and Immoralities! such as, I believe, were never known before. What used to be perform'd in secret, is now acted at Noon-day, nay proclaim'd on the House-tops, even gloried

gloried in. We have the Form of Godliness, but the Influence is gone. With what fatal Contempt do the Great treat Religion in many respects? I will mention one, and that is the monstrous disregard of the Lord's Day: They will rather choose to go, *one to his Farm, another to his Merchandise*, nay to mere Diversions, than appear in a religious Assembly to worship the Lord their Maker. But not only so, the Contagion is spread amongst almost all Orders and Degrees of Men; and in reality the Effect of all this Contempt of Religion has been to let Men loose from those Principles they had, and give them looser in their stead. But I believe we shall always find that the truest Protestant is the truest Subject; the Protestant who is so out of a Motive of Religion as well as civil Liberty.

It is in the Power of the middling sort of People to hinder the Contagion from spreading; if only this way, that each will endeavour to mend one, and by their own good Example put even Vice and Irreligion to the Blush, and oblige it to sneak in Holes and Corners as it us'd to do. It becomes us to do all, at this Time, in our Power in Defence of our Faith, and leave the rest to the almighty's Providence. *Now* to be indifferent to Protestantism, or Popery, belongs only to those who believe neither, not to those who are really Protestants.

testants. God has now, to humble us, sent his Plagues among us; *not only War*, but as Judgment seldom comes alone, because Men will seldom be reform'd by one, *Murrain as well as War*; he waits with Patience to see if these sore things will make us turn from our evil Ways; if they do not, he has those sorer things, Conquest and Pestilence; 'tis not to be wondred, if he should suffer the *Romanists* to come and take away our Church and Nation.

If therefore you have any regard for your Anointed Sovereign, by God's Appointment now set over us, and his illustrious Family, which God preserve; if you have any Regard for your dear Country, for our more dear Religion, for our Liberties; if you have any Regard for your Posterity as well as your Sovereign, surely you will humble yourselves, this Day, before God with weeping, fasting and praying; ('tis what the Day deserves for royal Blood's being shed) and beg of the Almighty, that Iniquity may not be our Ruin; that he would not remember our Offences, nor the Offences of our Forefathers, but that he would spare those whom he has redeemed with his most precious Blood, and not be angry with us for ever.

Let us beg of God to go forth with our Fleets and Armies, to place a guard of Angels about the Person of his sacred Majesty and his royal General, that no unhallowed Arm may do them Violence;
that

that God would be pleased to turn the Hearts of his disobedient Subjects, and to put into his Hand a Scepter of Power, and a Sword of Justice, to enable him to cut off all Workers of Iniquity, who turn Religion into Rebellion, and Faith into Faction.

Let us beseech God to bless all his Friends and loyal Subjects, that they, without Cruelty or Oppression, may proceed towards the End of their Desires, and that he would crown all their Endeavours with a prosperous Event; that a speedy End may be put to this unnatural Rebellion; that all may cooperate to the Safety of our Sovereign and his Kingdoms, to the Practice of true Religion and Piety, and to the Comfort of all good People.

F I N I S.





